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ABSTRACT

The implications of an ethnicity variable, language usage patterns, on the status attainment of 1,777 Mexican American males, ages 18 to 64 years, in the civilian labor force were studied. Language was viewed as a background variable that influences the relative positioning of Chicanos in the stratification system. It was hypothesized that, in general, an inverse relationship exists between Spanish use and socio-economic attainment. Using data from the 1976 Survey of Income and Education, language was operationalized into five bilingual/monolingual categories of English and Spanish use. Subsequently, total, direct, and indirect effects were decomposed and analyzed using age, earning, education, occupation, weeks worked, region, and language usage as dependent variables. Contrary to previous evidence, it was found that language usage patterns significantly influenced the occupational and income attainments of Chicano males. Specifically, the more English was used to the exclusion of Spanish, the greater the rise in schooling levels, job prestige, and work income. At the same time, most of the effects of language, in its role as a background characteristic, were mediated by education--a factor that has a crucial influence in Chicano assimilation patterns. (Author/NEC)

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LANGUAGE USAGE AND THE STATUS ATTAINMENT OF CHICANO MALES

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LANGUAGE USAGE AND THE STATUS ATTAINMENT OF CHICANO MALES

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the implications of an ethnicity variable, language usage patterns, on the status attainment of Mexican-American males, ages 18 to 64 years, in the civilian labor force. Language is viewed as a background variable that influences the relative positioning of Chicanos in the stratification system. It is hypothesized that, in general, there is an inverse relationship between Spanish use and socio-economic attainment.

Using a national census survey, the 1976 Survey of Income and Education, language is operationalized into five bilingual/monolingual categories of English and Spanish use. Subsequently, total, direct, and indirect effects are decomposed and analyzed. Contrary to previous evidence, it was found that language usage patterns significantly influence the occupational and income attainments of Chicano males. Specifically, the results show that the more English is used to the exclusion of Spanish, the greater the rise in schooling levels, job prestige, and work income. At the same time, most of the effects of language, in its role as a background characteristic, is mediated by education--a factor that has a crucial influence in Chicano assimilation patterns.

INTRODUCTION

Hispanics are the second largest minority in the United States, comprising about five percent of the total population (United States Bureau of the Census, 1978). Mexican-Americans or

Chicanos[1] represent 59 percent of this group, or nearly eight million, of which 80 percent reside in the Southwestern states of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. Considered as a group, Mexican-Americans are quite diverse in their origins and rates of assimilation as reflected by various social, psychological, and economic characteristics.

One view of Chicanos as an ethnic minority is that they are "new wave immigrants" (Featherman and Hauser, 1978). In part, this reflects the historical fact of a large influx of Mexican immigrants into the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, but especially the increased immigration from Mexico since the termination of the *Bracero* Labor Program. Whether one considers Chicanos "new" immigrants or colonized victims (Murguía, 1975), the more critical matter is their continued disproportional representation in low status positions. For recent immigrants, low social background characteristics coupled with the difficulties inherent in the first stages of acculturation partly account for the group's incumbency in low status positions. However, there is some evidence that many second- and third-generation Chicanos are not experiencing the upward social mobility of earlier immigrant groups. This study addresses the importance of language usage patterns with regard to this maldistribution of Chicanos in the socio-economic hierarchy.

"Ethnicity" refers to the sociocultural features of a group that shares a common ancestry and a set of experiences and charac-

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[1] These two terms will be used interchangeably throughout the paper, disregarding the politics of either label.

teristics such as history, phenotypical features, art and music forms, language, and cuisine. Language is only one aspect of ethnicity but one that lends itself to measurement. Different patterns of English and Spanish usage as an aspect of cultural behavior seem to influence labor market outcomes in terms of socio-economic rewards. Because of the historical and situational uniqueness of the Chicano group, I hypothesize that language is a significant factor that mediates such status attainment variables as education, occupation, and earnings.

The condition of differential assimilation patterns through language usage is correlated with solid political and historical circumstances. Politically created in 1848 by the Treaty of *Guadalupe Hidalgo*, Chicanos have been transformed by years of interactive struggle and immigration in a territory that is controlled by the dominant Anglo majority. Close proximity to the cultural motherland and phenotypical differences, due to the uneven miscegenation process, are factors that assure the continuation of Chicano ethnicity for some time to come.

Entrance on any level of the American stratification system seems to require individuals to relinquish that portion of their culture and take on the language, customs, values, and attitudes of the host society. Since language diversity is a viable part of Chicano culture, speaking Spanish and/or English is likely to have an effect on the socio-economic rewards of Chicanos who use one language over another.

My purpose is to consider this indicator of ethnicity in a more complete fashion by first providing a brief overview of the

current socio-economic status of Chicanos. A short review of the sociological literature will outline the position of Chicanos in the stratification system. Finally, the implications of various language usage patterns in a status attainment framework will be assessed.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION[2]

Demographically, the Mexican-American population is a young group with a median age of 20 years. It is a highly urbanized population, with 77 percent living in metropolitan areas, compared to an Anglo population of 68 percent in 1975. Of the metropolitan residents, 44 percent of the Mexican-American population lived in central cities, compared to 25.5 percent of the Anglo population.

In educational and economic terms, Chicanos do poorly compared to the Anglo population. For example, in 1975, 39.5 percent of Mexican-American males in the labor force had completed eight years of schooling or less whereas only 11 percent of Anglo males in the work force were in this category. Close to one-fourth of all economically active Chicanos aged 25 or more in 1975 had completed less than five years of schooling. During the same year, 71 percent of the economically active Chicano males earned less than $10,000 compared to 49 percent for their Anglo counterparts; the median annual earnings for Mexican-American male workers was $6,750 whereas the respective figure for Anglo males was $10,184.

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[2]All statistics in this section are taken from the United States Bureau of the Census, 1976 and represent the male civilian force 16 years and older.

Earnings are directly related to and affected by the occupations held by workers. Overall, Chicano males are less likely to be in the professional, technical, managerial, or administrative positions, being more likely to occupy the service and skilled and unskilled manual labor occupations. About five percent of employed Mexican-American males held professional and managerial positions compared to 15 percent for Anglos.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Relatively few studies exist that specifically deal with status attainment, mobility, and the relative cost of ethnicity for Mexican-Americans. The majority of these make little or no reference to the significance of language patterns. In the few exceptions differential usage of English and Spanish is usually mentioned as a possible explanation for slower assimilation, but only a couple of studies systematically explore the significance of this statement. Only a few published works investigate Chicano status attainment (Featherman and Hauser, 1978; and Peñalosa, 1969 are a few examples). Fewer works specifically investigate the significance of language as a mediating influence in their models (Lopez, 1976 and Suter, 1972 are two exceptions).

Past research on Mexican-Americans characterizes the relative position of this ethnic group as one of a disadvantaged minority. Various explanations and theoretical perspectives are given to explain the persistence of low status. Some advocates of the assimilation paradigm note that the slow assimilation patterns are caused by persisting cultural differences between Anglos and Chicanos

(Kluckhohn, 1961). Others perceive assimilation as a linear process of cultural change that will eventually result in reduced group differences. As early as the 1930s one social scientist claimed that Mexican-Americans were almost to that point of complete assimilation:

> While their grandparents speak chiefly Spanish, while their parents speak both Spanish and English, they (third generation Mexican-Americans) are refusing to speak Spanish. They are surely more assimilated than were the preceding generation...the third generation Mexican-Americans are better assimilated than the second, and of course, than the first generation. (Teske and Nelson, 1974, pp. 218-219)

In a study conducted 20 years later, these same authors stated that "[t]hose individuals (Mexican-Americans) who have advanced substantially either economically or in educational status, have tended to lose their identity with the group" (Teske and Nelson, 1974, p. 219).

The lower status achievements among Chicanos have been explained from different perspectives. Some researchers argue that the vitality of Chicano ethnicity has not been diminished despite Anglicization programs of educational institutions (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1971a; 1972). The implication is that trying to have Chicanos conform to Anglo culture is not the issue. Rather, changing attitudes and policies within the schools will more effectively deal with the low educational rates of Chicanos. In socio-psychological studies, family socialization patterns are used to explain differences in educational achievement (Anderson and Evans, 1976). Other studies take a structuralist view, concluding that Chicanos are similar to the majority of Americans;

by controlling for class instead of ethnicity, one can better explain low status through mobility aspirations (Heller, 1970).

My perspective is similar to the studies seeking to isolate variables that influence status attainment levels. The difference between this and previous studies is that language in my study is posited to be an important background variable. That adherence to Mexican cultural values, as reflected in Spanish use, retards the socio-economic achievement of Chicanos is examined. It is suspected that extensive use of English is a necessary condition for attainment of high status and economic rewards in Anglo society.

Although there are some interesting and important studies on Spanish and English usage by Hispanics in the field of sociolinguistics, they are mainly concerned with the intrinsic questions of retention, transmission, and use of different languages. From these studies the basis of the argument that language is an important facet of ethnic behavior is found. For example, Estrada (1975) found that many persons of Spanish origin speak combinations of English and Spanish with low proportions, 10 to 15 percent, at each end of the monolingual extreme. Skrabaneck (1970) found significant statistical relationships between language usage and socio-economic factors, concluding that Chicanos with low levels of income, education, and occupational status used Spanish more extensively. Lopez (1978) found that a high proportion of Chicanos shift to English through bilingualism. He referred to this process as "mass bilingualism" (meaning Spanish was the language of upbringing and English is currently used in the home). Lopez was correct in his finding that language shifts are occurring, but his

conclusions about the extent to which this is taking place (which he feels are substantial) were not substantiated by his evidence. His methodology was flawed by the operationalization of generational groups. "Creating" generations from cross-sectional data as he did leaves a false impression of change over time. This modification is inappropriate for viewing group differentials based on nativity rather than age.

One final item of importance for the study is the validity of census reports on language usage and proficiency based on self-reported responses. Extensive study by Fishman (1969) of a Puerto Rican barrio in New York City led him to conclude that the reliability of self-reporting was true to the factual world created by social scientists only in combination with other self-reported attributes such as income and occupation. Fishman found little relationship between self-reported bilingual usage or ability and specifically tested details of proficiency in English and Spanish. In other words, census data for a population with differential language usage patterns, like the Chicano population, is valid if only self-reported data is used for the analysis. Incongruities appear if a researcher would use self-reported data in combination with comprehensive sociolinguistic proficiency information.

DATA, MODEL, AND HYPOTHESIS

In 1976 a comprehensive national survey, the Survey of Income and Education was conducted in all 50 states by the United States

Census Bureau.[3] From this sample a population of 2,035 Chicano male respondents, aged 18 through 64 in the civilian labor force[4] was extracted. The population analyzed includes only those employed full-time and those employed part-time for "structural reasons" such as slack work periods or a company strike. This exclusion of voluntary part-time workers rids the data of an excess of low earners, persons with no occupations, and labor force participants still in school. The sample of 1,777 Chicanos analyzed assures a population of economically active males from which solid generalizations can be made.

The model used in this study takes, as its point of departure, the earlier works of occupational mobility and status attainment by Blau and Duncan (1967) and Duncan *et al.* (1972). My approach is not a replication of their models or a study of occupational mobility. The idea of a causal process of measurable events occurring and affecting a group's status position is used. While it is agreed that the socio-economic achievement process of an individual begins and is affected by background characteristics like parents' education and occupational status, number of siblings,

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[3] A three-level hierarchial computer file structure was constructed using household, family, and person records of 151,170 interviewed households or 752,960 respondents of all ages. The information contained in this sample is of demographic, geographic, economic, health, and language related characteristics. Because this is the first survey that has data on Chicanos on a national level, it was seen as an excellent source of information to test my assumption.

[4] By dealing with only males, the rather complicating issues of dissimilar male and female educational and occupational distributions, possible sex interaction differences, and double discriminatory effects that are not controlled for in a study of this limited scope is avoided.

and the possible mediating influences of socio-psychological variables (e.g., significant others and occupational aspirations), I was unable to consider these variables in my analysis. Nevertheless, because we are dealing with a factor that has not been systematically explored in the status attainment literature, I saw an opportunity to contribute to the understanding of Chicano socio-economic achievement. Because Chicanos are primarily a low status group, it is likely that background characteristics like parents' educational and occupational status are less important detriments to the son's socio-economic achievement in comparison to Anglos. (To see how these background variables perform for Anglo males, see Sewell and Hauser, 1975.)

The variables used in the analysis of Chicano status attainment are age, earnings, education, occupation, weeks worked, region, and language usage. Each will be discussed to explain their use in a regression analysis. Age is an exogenous variable measured in years and refers to the last birthday of occurrence. A respondent's age can affect the amount of education attained, occupation, and accrued yearly financial rewards. Age can partly account for differences in status attainment because it reflects a person's labor force experience, length of time in the labor force being partly a function of date of birth, and subsequent entrance into the labor market.

The use of 18 to 64 year olds (as compared to 25 to 64 year olds) includes Chicanos who are just entering the labor force because the Chicano population has an above average drop-out rate from high school. Of those who do complete high school, few go on

for more formal education, entering the labor market at relatively early ages. (Further support for this issue is found in the United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1971b and the United States Bureau of the Census, 1978.)

Region of residence is a factor of some consequence for the socio-economic attainment of Chicano males. It affects income and employment opportunity structures as well as language usage patterns. Region is becoming more important as the Chicano population slowly disperses into other areas of the country. Over the years, many Chicanos have migrated to the fields and eventually the cities of midwestern states such as Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin, settling permanently in the area. Over 85 percent of the Chicano population resides in five southwestern states, many having migrated to the west coast during the last 20 years. In spite of the uneven regional distribution, it was considered pertinent to divide the sample into three categories to represent region of residence. Nearly eight percent of the sample resides in the midwestern states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. A dummy variable indicating midwestern residence was created for this group. The five southwestern states where 87 percent of the sample resides became another dummy variable, and the remaining areas of the nation are the reference category.

Weeks worked in 1975 is a continuous random variable introduced in the earnings equation to account for the variation in earnings that depends only upon the time spent working during the year (as compared to, for example, type of job held or level of schooling). The composition of population requires some control

for the possibilities of having men with essentially the same educational level and occupational score but different earned incomes because of the amount of work time invested during the year.

Previous research has identified language transitions among the Chicano population that reflect three general language patterns. Language of upbringing is a language behavior most often used for analyses based on census or survey data (Lopez, 1976; 1978). Easier to use and more widely available, it is a measure of what language was used when a given adult was a child. Usually, either the use of Spanish or English is reported. However, this does not address the varied language use patterns to which a Chicano child may be exposed. Spanish may be spoken by the parents and a combination of English and Spanish by older siblings. A younger child may speak Spanish or English, depending on whether parents, family, or friends are being addressed. This sort of diversity is missed by a question asking for one language that was used most often when growing up.

A second indicator of language usage is current home language use by adults.[5] This variable relates to language behavior that may or may not reflect patterns developed during childhood. As

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[5] In a cross tabular test of home language usage and general language usage by different levels of bilingualism and monolingualism, no significant differences between the proportions of the categories were noted. Language usage patterns do not significantly change from home to outside use by Chicano male adults. The selection of general language usage was to make the discussion of results more compelling.

a child grows into an adult more contact and interaction is outside the home--in the neighborhood, school, and job. Language transitions for many Chicanos mean that Spanish, as the dominant home language, is lost in favor of English. This evolution of early language speaking patterns occurs through contact and interaction with friends, teachers, siblings, and others.

The last aspect of language use central to the operationalization of language concerns is the language most frequently used in everyday activities. Language use outside the home more directly affects status attainment levels.

Language usage as a relevant exogenous variable is used as a predetermined variable in the socio-economic attainment of Chicano males to represent a dimension of cultural or ethnic diversity within the population. The Chicano population was divided by Spanish and English language usage based on individual reports about primary and secondary ordering of languages used. This operationalization is shown in Table 1, which presents the percentage distribution of respondents by primary and secondary languages. The category "not applicable" refers to persons who answered a previous question in a way that renders allocation to these two language categories redundant. For example, individuals coded "not applicable" in both primary and secondary language were Chicanos brought up in English-speaking homes, presently speak English in their own homes, and are United States-born citizens. By means of antecedent questions I was able to allocate all but four percent of the sample to one of five language use categories. Persons cross-referenced in the dual language cells of English

Table 1

PROPORTIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64, BY PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AND SECONDARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN (N=1777)

Second language spoken often--Secondary	Language usually spoken--Primary			
	N.A.	English	Spanish	Total
Not applicable (N.A.)	9.04	8.75	16.60	34.39
English	--	--	25.15	25.15
Spanish	--	36.68	--	36.68
missing	3.44	.17	.17	3.78
				100.00%

and Spanish are the bilingual Chicanos. Individuals who used one language to the exclusion of the other (the "not applicable" row) were classified as monolingual Spanish or English. The categories operationalized as a series of dummy variables are explained by the following definitions.

- Spanish monolingual. Created as the reference category, these are the Chicanos who speak and mainly use Spanish as their medium of communication. In the sample this group is 17.3 percent of the total.

- Spanish bilingual. Chicanos classified in this category conduct most of their business and recreational activities in Spanish but can and will speak some English when necessary. Twenty-seven percent of the sample is in this category.

• English bilingual. These are individuals who feel more at ease or use English more frequently than Spanish. As the largest group, this category represents 37.1 percent of the sample.

• English monolingual-1. One of the two categories of English monolinguals, they speak only English and use no other language. This category is nine percent of the sample.

• English monolingual-2. This group of respondents, which is the remaining 9.4 percent, are all native-born Chicanos who used English at home as children and who now use English at home as adults. For individuals classified in this category language is based on usage in the family environment only; for English monolingual-1 Chicanos, English usage is based on overall language behavior. The first group is composed of home background monolingual practitioners and the second is made up of general monolingual practitioners. The distinction, admittedly a fine one of locational usage, adds to the refinement of the construct.

Educational attainment is our first dependent variable in the causal sequence, measured as a continuous variable representing the completed years of schooling. Occupation, the second dependent variable, is represented by the Duncan socio-economic prestige scores corresponding to an individual's "longest job held in 1975." Current occupation is a less desirable item to represent a respondent's earnings during the previous year, and comparatively speaking, both longest and most recent job were found to be similar so that the choice of longest over current occupation is more substantive than statistical. In the causal ordering of the dependent variables, occupation is a mediating influence between education and income.

Income, the third factor of status position, is a continuous variable measured as total personal earnings, which includes wages and salaries that were grossed for the 1975 calendar year. It is hoped to reveal how much the predetermined variables in the model account for the variation in earnings. The causal model, analyzed in Figure 1, illustrates the relationship between language and the dependent variables indexing status position. Table 2 presents a breakdown of the mean levels for each of the language groupings.

Figure 1

VARIABLES USED IN THE ANALYSIS

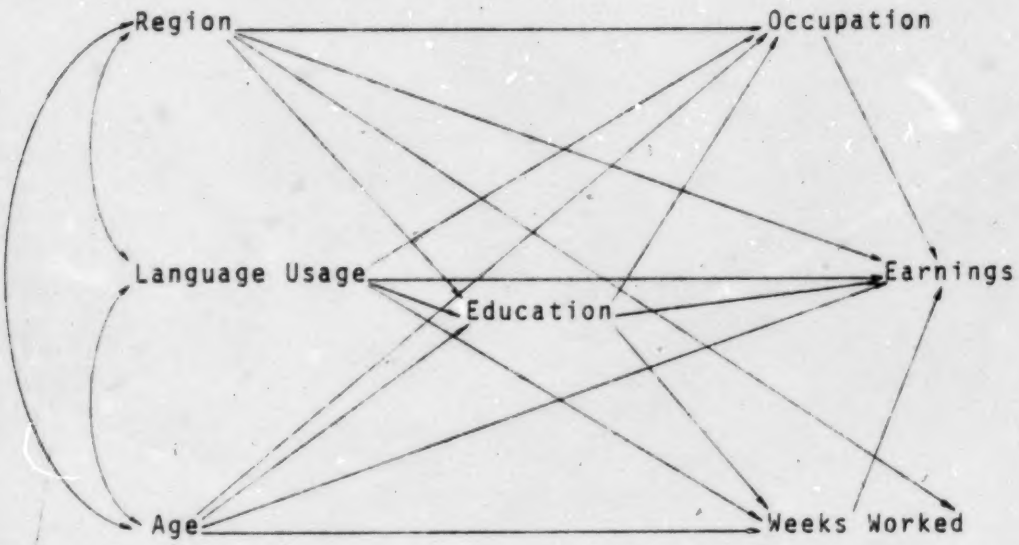

Table 2

MEAN LEVEL OF EDUCATION, OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE, EARNINGS (1975 DOLLARS), AND WEEKS WORKED LAST YEAR FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64, BY LANGUAGE USAGE GROUPS (N=1777)

	Education*	Occupation*	Earnings*	Weeks worked**
	X	X	X	X
Spanish monolingual	5.8	14.8	5742.0	42.3
Spanish bilingual	8.6	23.2	7416.2	46.0
English bilingual	11.3	32.9	9830.3	46.3
English monolingual 1	11.5	31.4	10786.7	44.7
English monolingual 2	12.3	35.0	10296.1	45.7
(N)	1663	1632	1635	1637
% missing	6.4	8.2	8.0	7.9

*Significantly different group means at the .01 level.
**Significantly different group means at the .05 level.

For each variable the Spanish monolingual group is separated by a wide gap from the next group, the Spanish bilinguals. Overall, speakers of only Spanish have lower education, occupational status, and income levels when compared to English bilingual and monolingual users. The Spanish monolingual group also works fewer weeks on the average. For this population there are 6 educational years, 10 occupational prestige points, and $4,500 separating the "average" monolingual extremes. There are only two discrepancies in the monotonic pattern of relationship between language and status

indicators. This is between the mean earning levels of two English monolingual groups. Even though the second English monolingual group is better educated, has a higher job prestige score, and works close to the same number of weeks, their mean earnings are slightly lower than the first English monolingual group. On the other hand, there are small statistically significant differences between the primary users of English in this sample. Once a Chicano switches from Spanish to English as the primary language of communication, the mean level distances between the three categories in status attainment are minimal. The final discrepancy is in the "weeks worked" column where it will be noted that the Spanish and English bilingual groups, on the average, worked the most weeks in 1975, yet had lower earnings than the monolingual groups who worked two to three weeks less.

In another context the same dependent variables are presented in a breakdown of mean status levels by region of residence (see Table 3). In this case, only education and earnings reach statistical significance for group mean differences. On the average, Chicanos in the three regions are essentially similar in occupational prestige and weeks worked. Though Chicanos living in the Midwest have the lowest mean schooling levels, they have the highest average work incomes. This is plausible if there is a high representation of first-generation immigrants who work in relatively high paying jobs among this group. For the great majority of Chicanos, living in the Southwest does not result in higher economic benefits for the same number of weeks worked.

Table 3

MEAN LEVEL OF EDUCATION, OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE, EARNINGS (1975 DOLLARS), AND WEEKS WORKED LAST YEAR FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64, BY REGION (N=1777)

	Education*	Occupation	Earnings*	Weeks Worked
	X	X	X	X
Southwest	9.9	27.2	8413.5	45.3
Midwest	8.6	25.1	9776.6	44.7
Rest of the nation	10.0	28.6	9520.0	45.9
(N)	1728	1693	1695	1693
% missing	2.8%	4.7	4.6	4.7

*Significantly different group means at the .05 level.

Reviewing the past discussion of variables and the regression analysis that has been proposed, how does the influence of language usage patterns, net of the effects of other relevant exogenous variables as age and region, affect the schooling, occupational status, and earnings of Chicano males in the labor force? From this question a certain set of assumptions can be made explicit. In general, we expect that a larger amount of variation in status attainment will be explained by differential language usage patterns than has been previously noted. This means, for example, that the socio-economic achievements of Chicanos who use English as a primary language will be higher than those corresponding to individuals who use Spanish as a primary form of communication.

At the same time, there is a possibility of gradual but significant differences in status achievements between bilingual English users and the two monolingual English groups.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

To address the main question in a systematic fashion, regression analysis is used to net out the total, direct, and indirect effects of the random variables and to estimate their statistical and substantive importance for the succession of variables indicating status position. (For a straightforward explanation of the decomposition procedure, see Alwin and Hauser, 1975.) From the model (Figure 1) three structural and four decomposed regression equations are estimated using list-wise deletion on a weighted population[6] of 1,634 Chicano males in the experienced civilian labor force.[7] Each one of the status attainment indicators is regressed on the causally prior independent variables to produce unstandardized regression co-efficients which, along with the F-statistic, indi-

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[6] To adjust for sampling design, variability, and coverage errors with the oversampling of low income families and to infer to the general population, a weight adjustment equation on the sample was used. The equation is a scaling down of relevant variables and their data to a more manageable N size and is computed by:

$$\frac{\text{Person weight for each individual}}{\text{Average person weight}} = \text{New weight}$$

[7] This is a loss of 8.0 percent of the population of 1,777 Chicanos in the experienced labor force (full-time and part-time due to structural restraints). This loss is due to missing information on occupation (4.7 percent), work income (4.6 percent), which excludes negative and zero earners, education (3 percent), and language usage (3.7 percent).

cate the significance of the "effects" of variables in the model.

The first equation is a regression of education on the language usage, age, and region variables that contains only total and direct effects. These happen to be the same in this instance and are represented by one column of metric co-efficients. In the second equation the decompositions will account for the mediating effects of the first endogenous variable--education--and the total effects of the exogenous variables on occupational prestige. Earnings are regressed in the final equation on all exogenous variables in the final equation and each predetermined endogenous variable is entered separately. Weeks worked in 1975 is entered as the final independent variable. For occupation and earnings, this step-wise inclusion method is done to account for the total effects of the exogenous variables on the dependent variable and the transformations that occur with the metric co-efficients when each endogenous variable is entered by itself.

These equations permit one to decompose the total effects, which are the indirect effects (those effects transmitted by intervening variables) and the direct effects of all variables within the full structural equations. This means that from the regression equations of occupational prestige and earnings the indirect effects via the mediating endogenous variables can be computed. The discussion will not enter into the disentanglement of correlated causes on the dependent variables. Instead, the focus is on direct, indirect, and total effects of each status attainment indicator in an assumed sequence, which is a fixed restraint imposed on this additive, non-interactive model.

Table 4 shows the correlation co-efficients of the variables in the analysis. On quick examination one notices that the correlations are all relatively low except for the high negative relationship between the two regional variables. This is due, in part, to the contruction of trivariate dummy variables. Notice also the negative relationships of all the language dummy categories with each other. To be in a language usage group is to be inversely related to any other language usage category, an expected result of binary construction. Another expected relationship of high correlation is between educational attainment and occupational prestige (.51), which shows the close positive relationship between these two indicators of status position. Total earnings, by contrast, is not as highly correlated with these two status variables. The direction is correct but the strength is weaker when correlated with occupation (.36) and schooling (.30). Finally, notice the negative relationship ($r = -.28$) between educational attainment and age. This is an expected finding, that is, the older a Chicano male is, the lower his educational level. This is due to the rise of educational requirements for some jobs along with the growing diversification of the occupational structure.

Turning to the bottom of Table 4, which presents the means and standard deviations of all the variables used, the figures show that this Chicano male sample is similar in age, education, and work income to other Mexican origin populations surveyed in current population reports. (To compare, see United States Bureau of the Census, 1976; 1978.) The information given in Table 4

Table 4

CORRELATION CO-EFFICIENT MATRIX AND MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF VARIABLES USED IN ANALYSIS FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64 (N=1,634)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Spanish bilingual	--										
English bilingual	-.474										
English monolingual-1	-.189	-.237	--								
English monolingual-2	-.199	-.250	-.099	--							
Age	.054	-.011	-.021	-.107	--						
Southwest	.028	.053	-.034	-.044	-.024	--					
Midwest	-.011	-.048	-.025	.014	.035	-.763	--				
Education	-.162	.313	.150	.214	-.278	.062	-.081	--			
Occupation	-.118	.213	.067	.120	.027	.009	-.020	.510	--		
Earnings	-.126	.166	.117	.096	.277	-.075	.067	.300	.360	--	
Weeks Worked	.044	.055	-.010	-.004	.207	-.007	.001	.116	.186	.497	--
$\bar{X}$	.274	.372	.086	.096	35.119	.881	.073	9.526	27.089	8593.841	45.106
Standard Deviations	(.446)	(.484)	(.281)	(.294)	(11.462)	(.324)	(.260)	(4.230)	(20.096)	(5739.268)	(12.688)

seems to offer no surprises in terms of the population's characteristics. The typical Mexican-American male in our 1976 sample was 35 years old, without a high school diploma, 1975 gross earnings exceeded $8,600 from a less than 50 work week year, lived quite probably in a southwestern state, and more likely than not was either an English or Spanish bilingual.

Table 5 displays the results of education regressed on the relevant variables. These findings are the total and direct effects of education on all exogenous variables in the study. About 40 percent of the total variance in educational attainment is explained by language, age, and region. Alternatively, the results show that we have not accounted for other variables that influence schooling levels. This is where family background characteristics might come into play, but as previously indicated, are not likely to contribute greatly to explained variation.

The more interesting story is told in the equation's unstandardized regression co-efficients. All were found to be significant except for those corresponding to region. Two likely explanations for the non-significance and low positive co-efficient values for this factor are that (1) the effects of regional variation on schooling levels do not exist, or (2) that these influences are not captured because of the large, heterogenous divisions represented by each region. In the first instance, this would mean that school performance was regionally similar for Chicanos no matter where they attended school, creating the insignificant effect of region of the country on educational attainment. The more distinct possibility is the second explanation, i.e., that the groupings of areas are too

Table 5

REGRESSION OF EDUCATION ON EXOGENOUS VARIABLES FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64

Variable	Metric Co-efficient (S.E.)
Spanish bilingual	3.426** (.251)
English bilingual	6.140** (.239)
English monolingual-1	6.478** (.342)
English monolingual-2	6.946** (.331)
Age	-.085** (.007)
Southwest	.692 (.391)
Midwest	.152 (.488)
Constant	7.458
Total R	.630
Total R^2	.396

*Significantly different from zero at the .05 level.

**Significantly different from zero at the .01 level.

large to be able to show the diversity of regional effect on schooling. A third possibility is that the region of residency is confounded by the fact that the place of schooling and 1976 residence are different so that the effect of region is wrong for the context into which it is put in the equation. Migratory behavior,

making the last possibility plausible, is much too low to consider it more seriously.

Though highly significant, age has an unexpectedly low metric co-efficient value, only .08 of a grade less for each year increase in age. What is interesting to note is the effect of language usage patterns on schooling. Spanish bilingual Chicanos gain up to three years of additional schooling for a unit increase in English language usage. At the same time, being in one of the English language usage groups adds three years more to that schooling level. Yet there are no large differentials among the three primary English usage categories except in the expected monotonic increase according to level of English usage.

A different scene is constructed by the information contained in Table 6. Two equations are shown; the first is a decomposed equation showing the effects of the exogenous variables on occupational prestige. Explained variation is a low 12 percent of the total variance in the dependent variable. Comparing metric co-efficients among the language variables, the English monolingual-2 group has the largest co-efficient value that results in an increment of 12 additional occupational prestige points above the mean value of the Spanish bilingual category. The order of importance between English bilinguals and English monolingual-1 is different and results in a higher co-efficient value for English bilinguals *vis-à-vis* English monolingual level 1.

Moving to column two, which shows the complete effects of the exogenous variables and the mediating influence of education, one notices substantial changes in the co-efficient values and in

Table 6

REGRESSION OF OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE ON EXOGENOUS VARIABLES AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AGES 18-64

Variables	(1) Total Effects Metric Co-efficient (S.E.)	(2) Direct Effects Metric Co-efficient (S.E.)	(3) Indirect Effects via (Total-Direct) EDATT
Spanish bilingual	8.371**	-.294	8.665
	(1.436)	(1.360)	
English bilingual	17.872**	2.341	15.531
	(1.364)	(1.451)	
English monolingual-1	16.859**	.472	16.387
	(1.956)	(1.938)	
English monolingual-2	20.129**	2.559	17.570
	(1.893)	(1.913)	
Age	.098*	.314**	-.216
	(.041)	(.038)	
Southwest	.855	-.894	1.749
	(2.236)	(2.007)	
Midwest	.984	.599	.385
	(2.797)	(2.500)	
Education	--	2.530**	
		(.127)	
Constant	10.493	-.084	
Total R	.350	.543	
Total R^2	.122	.295	

*Significantly different from zero at the .05 level.
**Significantly different from zero at the .01 level.

the total R^2. Increased by 17 percentage points, the squared multiple correlation co-efficient is doubled by the addition of schooling into the equation. Additionally, the mean value of the omitted categories or the constant has shifted downward and become a negative value. The metric values for many variables have also decreased substantially, leaving their values insignificant except for the age variable. With the addition of education to the model, it can be seen that schooling has an important mediating effect on occupational prestige, an effect which converts and downgrades the significance and values of the previously important language variables. The rank ordering of the language usage groups did not change, but age increased in significance. However, education took the position of prime variable in exercising direct effects on occupational prestige.

In column three of Table 6 the indirect effects were computed. These are the unstandardized co-efficients for the mediating effect through educational attainment. Proportionally speaking, most of the effect of language on occupational prestige is exercised through education, which more fully explains the transformations that occur in the direct effects equation. For example, 77 percent of the effect of being English bilingual or English monolingual level 2 can be explained by the indirect route through schooling. The proportions for the language variables along with the rest of the variables in equation two show the small values that are accounted for by the direct effects. This evidence goes further in proving the crucial aspect of education in determining Chicano occupational attainments.

When education is introduced into the occupation equation, the significance of language is negated. Education is clearly one of the more important variables affecting job prestige. Where educational attainment is a prerequisite for professional and upper white-collar jobs (many of these jobs high in prestige), Chicanos are not likely to be found in such positions since relatively few continue their education beyond high school. Instead, most Chicanos are proportionally over-represented in the blue collar, manual, and low-skill service industry professions, where education and language usage (or communicative skills) are not job requisites.

Because of the Chicano's relative positioning in the job market when occupational prestige is regressed on language use, controlling for education, almost all the effect is re-routed through schooling. Hence, language usage appears to be unimportant in the direct acquisition of occupational status. But when education is regressed on language usage as in Table 5, it is an important variable explaining schooling differentials. This, of course, is reasonable because for Chicanos to survive and succeed they must learn the language used in the educational institutions. In this respect, language plays an important role in mediating socio-economic achievement.

Each of the final four equations of personal total earnings shown in Table 7 further illustrate how language influences socio-economic achievement. The first equation decomposes the effects of the exogenous variables on work income. The language usage groups are all highly significant, as are the effects of age. Again one

Table 7

REGRESSION OF EARNINGS ON EXOGENOUS AND PREDETERMINED VARIABLES FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64

Variables	(1) Metric Co-eff. (S.E.)	(2) Metric Co-eff. (S.E.)	(3) Metric Co-eff. (S.E.)	(4) Metric Co-eff. (S.E.)
Spanish bilingual	1723.412**	190.250	206.199	-141.907
	(394.641)	(399.409)	(392.649)	(352.815)
English bilingual	4364.367**	1616.489**	1489.321**	1397.952**
	(374.753)	(426.193)	(419.310)	(376.332)
English monolingual-1	5397.586**	2498.269**	2472.608**	2606.326**
	(537.438)	(569.223)	(559.592)	(502.244)
English monolingual-2	5315.108**	2206.443**	2067.454**	2108.547**
	(520.164)	(562.113)	(552.896)	(496.195)
Age	152.499**	190.733**	173.673**	127.563
	(11.256)	(11.254)	(11.289)	(10.395)
Southwest	-421.221	-730.726	-682.150	-533.582
	(614.369)	(589.624)	(579.672)	(520.274)
Midwest	1336.723	1268.588	1236.056	1311.714*
	(765.982)	(734.448)	(722.020)	(647.980)
Education	--	447.559**	310.165**	240.795**
		(37.331)	(40.930)	(36.898)
Occupation	--	--	54.314**	40.937**
			(7.164)	(6.465)
Weeks worked	--	--	--	177.422**
				(8.945)
Constant	440.593	-2897.336	-2442.573	-7825.170
Total R	.438	.507	.532	.650
Total R^2	.192	.257	.283	.423

*Significantly different from zero at the .05 level.

**Significantly different from zero at the .01 level.

sees a monotonic increase in dollar value as the amount of English usage increases, but there is a slight downward shift when the most language assimilated group is reached. Being brought up in an English-speaking home and using English at home as an adult does not insure a higher return in earnings as compared to the Chicanos raised in Spanish-speaking homes who are English monolingual speakers as adults. In other words, using English at home as a child is more important in obtaining educational and occupational prestige but this does not automatically insure commensurately higher income returns for English monolingual speakers who were never exposed to Spanish compared to those who might have switched from Spanish during the early years of life. In column one, the distance between English bilinguals and the two monolingual groups ranges between $1,033 for the English monolingual-1 group and $951 for the English monolingual-2 group.

In the second decomposed equation, which accounts for the mediating effect of education and the exogenous variables on earnings, the metric values of the language categories decrease with a substantial lowering of the mean value of the omitted categories. More specifically, the gap between English bilinguals and home English monolinguals is widened to $292, but essentially the values are the same. Midwest residency does not significantly influence income variation but every additional year of schooling is worth $448.

Column three presents the metric co-efficients that result when occupational prestige is introduced as the next predetermined variable, which sequentially influences earnings. Besides a 2.6

percentage point increase in total R^2, there is also a decrease in co-efficient values of causally prior variables; yet the constant is not as low as it previously had been in column two. To understand the relationship between education and occupation, the differences between the second and third columns of Table 7 should be compared. In the second column where education is entered first most of the total variation is captured, compared to column three, which includes occupation. The effects of occupation on work income are offset by education, which is entered first in the causal process. Otherwise, if occupation had a larger effect on earnings, the joint effects as reflected in total R^2 and the metric co-efficients in column three would be more substantial.

The final equation accounts for the direct effects of the exogenous and three endogenous variables on earnings. Taken together (see column four), these result in a lowering of the constant coupled with a decrease in the metric values of education and occupation. Otherwise, the results duplicate the pattern of significance created in decomposed form equation, with the exception that the Midwest residency variable becomes statistically significant. Total variance explained is an aspect worthy of note. Because the variables seem to relate more to the current forces at work on earning differentials, especially the number of weeks worked, I was able to account for 42 percent of the total variation in earnings for the sample of Chicano males. Of this total explained variance, the first two endogenous variables jointly account for 10.2 percentage points, or 36 percent of the total proportion in column

three. Meanwhile, the supply factor of number of weeks worked accounts for the largest proportion of explained variation by increasing total R^2 an additional 24 percentage points or, alternatively, 57 percent of the total. This result is expected considering that annual work income for many workers is a direct function of how much work time is invested during the year. Along with the other two endogenous variables, weeks worked is a highly significant variable that does not render either education or occupation insignificant. However, it does lower the co-efficient values of both variables.

In Table 8 the analysis is carried further by separating the total, direct, and indirect effects of the earnings equation. Through this decomposition the effects of each endogenous variable are unraveled so as to better illustrate the contributions made by the exogenous variables. These results show that a major share of the total effects of the language usage group is mediated through education. For example, $2,656, or 61 percent of the total effect of English bilinguals, is transmitted through the indirect efforts of schooling.

Overall, language usage has its greatest effect as a precursor via education, but the direct effects are also noteworthy because all but the Spanish bilingual category remained highly significant when all independent variables were entered in the equation. When education was added (see column two of Table 7), notice that in spite of decreases in the co-efficient dollar values, high statistical significance was still retained for three out of four language usage categories. In other words, Mexican-Americans who use

Table 8

TOTAL DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF ALL RELEVANT VARIABLES IN THE EARNINGS EQUATION FOR MEXICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, AGES 18-64

Variables	Total Effects	Indirect via Education	Indirect via Occupation	Indirect via Weeks worked	Direct Effects
Spanish bilingual	1723.412	1185.056	332.157	348.106	-252.907
English bilingual	4364.367	2656.509	218.537	91.369	1397.952
English monolingual-1	5397.586	3033.035	-108.057	-133.718	2606.326
English monolingual-2	5315.109	3149.758	97.896	-41.093	2108.547
Age	152.499	-84.344	63.170	46.110	127.563
Southwest	-421.221	458.073	-197.144	-148.569	-533.582
Midwest	1336.723	143.793	-43.126	-75.658	1311.714
Education	447.559	--	137.394	69.370	240.795
Occupation	54.314	--	--	13.377	40.937
Weeks worked	177.422	--	--	--	177.422

Spanish as the primary language are sifted out by the educational system so that lower earnings result while Chicano practitioners of English as the primary or only language make it through school and reap larger economic returns.

Age, on the other hand, exercises most of its effect on earnings directly, but a large suppressor effect is encountered through education. Age stays highly significant throughout and exercises little indirect effects via the three endogenous variables. Midwest residency becomes significant only in the final equation when all the variables are entered. Education and occupational prestige are also shown to have major portions of their influence transmitted directly to earnings. Over 50 percent of the total effects of education are direct (i.e., not transmitted through either occupation or weeks worked), although occupation does indirectly account for 31 percent of the total. Conversely, occupational prestige is mediated in only one-fourth of its total effect by weeks worked, the only variable between it and earnings.

Overall, the equations and decompositions for work income show a definite patterning of the variables used in the analysis. The values of the language usage variables indicate that as a Chicano uses more English over Spanish as a primary language, there is a rise in earnings. The only qualification is for the English monolingual extreme.

Age also plays a significant role, but the co-efficient values are not large so that in the final equation (Table 7) there is an additional rise of $128 in annual work income for every one-year increase in age. This is not surprising considering the well-

established relationship of declining rates of return for older ages. This means that as work income increases with experience and age, it reaches a plateau in years 35 through 55, followed thereafter by a gradual decline for men past their prime labor market ages. To account for this non-linear relationship some researchers enter age squared along with the continuous variable of age.

Meanwhile, residency in the southwestern states proved to be an insignificant variable in all the earnings equations and even produced a negative unstandardized co-efficient value in the full structural model where it failed to reach significance. By comparison, Midwest residency attained statistical significance in this model and produced a substantial positive metric co-efficient. On this basis, the case is made that Chicanos who worked in the Midwest instead of the Southwest benefit from higher economic rewards. Most of this difference can be attributed to the more highly developed industrial structure in the cities of the Midwest where opportunities for higher paying jobs are more plentiful than in the cities of the sun belt region.

CONCLUSION

The concern of this paper has been to explore the process of Chicano status attainment with respect to the effects of language usage patterns in combination with other variables established as indicators of status position in the American stratification system. The data available in the 1976 Survey of Income and Education permitted me to operationalize language usage more completely than

was possible using other census type surveys. Education, occupational prestige, and work income were regressed on the language variable in conjunction with age and region to assess their importance in explaining the variation of each of the status indicators and to ascertain the patterns of influence in terms of direct and indirect effect.

For the regression of occupational prestige and earnings on language usage, one cannot say the same unless schooling is not introduced in the equation. When it is, the following conclusion is reached: To move up the occupational ladder, one must receive formal schooling, which requires a mastery of English, frequently at the expense of losing Spanish. Without an adequate command of the dominant language one does not attain levels of schooling that are sufficiently high to gain entrance into college and certification into high status, high paying jobs.

Language usage differentiation was especially useful in displaying the results of the work income equations. One of the most interesting aspects was the overall pattern of consistency in the values generated, a result which provided greater assurance for the use of language in the model. The results showed a monotonic increase in dollar earnings as use of English to the exclusion of Spanish predominated. However, at the most assimilated extreme of the English monolingual category, being reared in an English-speaking home, being United States-born, and exclusively using English at home as an adult, allows individuals to reap higher educational and occupational gains, but somewhat lower economic returns relative to the English monolingual group reared

in Spanish-speaking homes.

In the final instance, being an English bilingual resulted in a loss of yearly income, 46 percent less than the English monolingual-1 group. To appraise the last work income equation, one must bear in mind that there are other variables involved that were not included in the analysis. Though 42 percent of the total variation (a successful showing) was accounted for, the results show that income variation is a complex function of variables not specifically accounted for. It is clear, however, that most of the explained variation is due to the number of weeks worked.

Taken one step further, through decomposition it has been shown that the effects of language usage in occupation and earnings are important, but these effects are mediated largely by schooling. This is not to say that language is an unimportant variable; by itself it is an important background characteristic that has to be monitored. This is particularly true when dealing with ethnic groups characterized by the extent of language diversity shown by the Chicano population. In this study status inequality within the Chicano population is shown to be significantly affected by language usage patterns. It makes sense intuitively that something other than English in America will likely have a detrimental effect on schooling levels, job prestige, and earnings. In fact, it may be so obvious that most scholars have neglected language as a variable of theoretical importance for explaining Chicano attainment levels. Accordingly, the present analysis has attempted to fill that void.

Essentially, I am impressed with the performance of the language usage variable in all the equations and its consistency in

displaying results that make sense in light of previous research. Also, the results challenge previous conclusions about the insignificance of this component of ethnicity. The results suggest that Chicanos who are English monolingual practitioners are heavily favored in Anglo-dominated institutions. Alternatively, due to the policies and cultural environment in which they function, Spanish bilingual and Spanish monolingual Chicanos are at a distinct disadvantage educationally, occupationally, and economically. In these latter two realms the role of language is more indirect.

This study has attempted to provide further insight into the subject of ethnic stratification, but more specifically, the role of language in the process of socio-economic achievement of Chicano males. There is a great need for more research to show that the approach to the study of Chicano status position is a fruitful one. However, to be more productive, data is also needed about other background characteristics and mediating socio-psychological variables. Having more of these specified characteristics will help outline the role of language usage on differential patterns of socio-economic achievement. Additionally, more in-depth studies that monitor in a more comprehensive fashion the significance of ethnicity for male and female workers of Mexican ancestry are needed. Studies of this type could elaborate on the subject of ethnic stratification.

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